



INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

143 W. Market Street
Indianapolis, IN 46204

INDIANA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

January 15, 2014

Indiana Government Center South – Auditorium
402 West Washington Street
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Board Members Present: Superintendent Glenda Ritz (chair), Mr. Troy Albert, Mr. Dan Elsener (secretary), Dr. David Freitas, Mr. Gordon Hendry, Ms. Andrea Neal, Ms. Sarah O'Brien, Dr. Brad Oliver, Mr. Tony Walker, Mr. B.J. Watts, and Ms. Cari Whicker.

Board Members Absent: None

I. CALL TO ORDER

Superintendent Ritz called the meeting to order and called roll. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

II. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Superintendent Ritz stated the next item is approval of the agenda. She said the adjudication hearing will be moved to the February meeting at the request of the attorneys for the parties. She said there is a request to add an action item – placement of corporations into accountability category grades. Three members agreed to place the item on the agenda. Upon motion, second and vote the agenda was approved. Ms. Ritz said approval of the minutes of the November 12th meeting will be addressed at the February meeting.

III. STATEMENT OF THE CHAIR

Superintendent Ritz gave a brief legislative update. She said the Department of Education ("Department") will focus its efforts regarding early childhood. She also gave a social studies update; the Department will have a roundtable meeting on February 20th when action will be taken with respect to social studies standards and then the issue will be brought to the Board in



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March for approval. Superintendent Ritz thanked Dr. Oliver for his work involving college and career readiness standards. She said the Department is on track with the timeline to have college and career readiness standards approved in April.

IV. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS AND REPORTS

Ms. Whicker discussed the recent teacher of the year banquet and congratulated Steve Perkins. She said it was an inspirational night for teachers.

V. PUBLIC GENERAL COMMENT

No public comment.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

Superintendent Ritz invited a motion to approve Rochester Community School Corporation's proposed change to its governing body selection plan. Upon motion, second and aye vote by all members present the consent agenda was passed (9-0, Dr. Oliver and Tony Walker were not present at this point).

VII. ADJUDICATIONS

This item will be addressed at the February 5, 2014 meeting.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS – ACTION

Approval of the 2014 Summer School Funding Categories

Superintendent Ritz announced the action item and invited a motion to approve. Upon motion by Cari Whicker, a second by Andrea Neal and a vote, this action item was approved by all members present (9-0, Dr. Oliver and Tony Walker were not present at this point).

Preliminary Approval of Cut Scores for the CORE Computer Education Content Assessment for Licensure

Superintendent Ritz invited Risa Regnier, from the Department, to address the Board. She said the requirement in the rule is that when a score is being recommended it needs preliminary



approval from the Board so the Department can post it for public comment, followed by bringing the comment(s) back to the Board for final approval. She further mentioned upon inquiry by Superintendent Ritz that there had not been a computer education test before with the prior test vendor. There was a panel brought together, she added, but it was too small statistically in terms of their results in taking the pilot test. The score setting was subsequently reviewed by a larger group, the results of which are before the Board now. Upon motion and second the Board voted to approve by all members present.

Approval Request for an Early Testing Window Date

Dr. Michelle Walker, from the Department, was invited to speak on this topic by Ms. Ritz. She explained that the Board can give the Department authority to grant requests within 7 calendar days of the start of a test window. The issue before the Board was the Bloomington Project School which needs more time; they are asking for early March. A motion was made and a second and the Board voted yes by all members present.

Approval of the Placement of School Corporations into Categories of Accountability

- Deb Dailey from the Department addressed the Board on this issue. She explained that corporations are assessed by using a model similar to a combined school model that has an elementary component, a high school component and a weighted average for the overall corporation grade. She said the Department starts with student level data and they do apply the 1%, 2% alternative assessment caps. Mr. Hendry asked if they were supposed to be presented in December and if so why were they delayed. Ms. Dailey responded that they hoped to have them on the December agenda but they were not able to complete them in time. Further, they were not able to get it on the January agenda as the result of miscommunication.
- Dr. Freitas asked if there was a comparison of this year with prior years. Ms. Dailey said there was a comparison done and explained the trends. Dr. Freitas responded that the trends seem to all be going in the right direction and he thanked teachers for their work. Mr. Elsener wanted some analysis done comparing similar districts with different grades to determine what the more successful district(s) are doing leading to the better grade and vice versa to move towards the goal of all "A"s.

Note: *Tony Walker arrived at this point in the meeting.*



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- Mr. Elsener continued that the analysis would provide concrete information on what is important in improving school grades. Superintendent Ritz responded that Mr. Elsener's concern came up in the accountability panel and said she believed the analysis is worth doing. She asked if the analysis should be done now or at the start of the next accountability system.

Note: *Dr. Oliver arrived at this point in the meeting.*

- Mr. Elsener clarified that he wants to look at methods, practices, processes and systems but that he would be open to anything. He specified that he wanted to look at what to do when a grade is received to further improvement. Superintendent Ritz responded that the Department does seek to accomplish that recommendation through outreach and school improvement plans once the information is in electronic format. Mr. Elsener added that a sophisticated analysis will be required to determine how a school improvement plan would be created or adjusted and to be able to inform schools regarding what works and doesn't work.
- Deb Dailey opined that the Department can do some sorting and cross-referencing. The analysis can't be done now given how the information is obtained. Once information is in electronic format the analysis can begin. Superintendent Ritz said the Department is in the process of working this out and can bring the Board some good information on this topic. Mr. Elsener suggested March as a target for making this an agenda item. Dr. Freitas added that he hoped we would look beyond the state of Indiana. Mr. Hendry said it was great to see the grades and applauded those school corporations that did well. He mentioned that Indianapolis Public Schools ("IPS") improved significantly. Deb Dailey said while IPS did not break out of the "F" category they did improve substantially. Mr. Albert expressed concern about the transition from the 4 point scale to the 100 point scale and what affect it could have on the failing schools. Mrs. Dailey said the Department can do some analysis on that as they run through the models over the next few months. Mr. Elsener said communities need to rally around these schools no matter the grade and encouraged the Board staff to be involved in this analysis. Mr. Hendry moved for approval of placement of school corporations into accountability categories, which was seconded by Ms. O'Brien. All voted in favor except Ms. Neal (10-1).

IX. DISCUSSION AND REPORTS

Waivers for Extreme Cold Weather



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- Superintendent Ritz distributed to the Board materials regarding waivers on account of extreme circumstances. She stated that June 1 would be the date waivers would be looked at and reviewed. Ms. Neal found the two days a very reasonable accommodation. Superintendent Ritz clarified this was not an automatic waiver. Dr. Oliver iterated that it is a waiver for the financial penalty for not meeting the 180 days. He inquired about internal Department guidance in determining when an extreme circumstance exists. Ms. Ritz said the Department determined that it was an extreme circumstance because of the weather based on individual circumstances; there are no internal defined guidelines on the issue. Mr. Elsener added that he would like to challenge the Board's thinking on the matter. He said bad weather is not unusual for Indiana. He disagreed with waiving days on account of bad weather; he believes snow days should be planned as a part of the school calendar. He said he thought this could set a bad precedent; as such he encouraged districts not to take advantage of the waivers, but instead to plan ahead for snow days in the school calendars. Mr. Hendry asked about the difference between Tuesday and Wednesday in the Department's decision. Superintendent Ritz said her decision was based on what the state government was doing on account of the snow and extreme cold temperature. She also added that the wind chill factor on Monday and Tuesday was state-wide.
- Mr. Hendry expressed concern about a blanket policy allowing waivers on account of bad weather. Ms. O'Brien added that she agreed with Mr. Elsener and Mr. Hendry. She said she was concerned the line was blurred between what is an acceptable waiver and what isn't. Dr. Oliver commented on the media statement from the Department; he said it caused a lot of confusion and should be best left at the local level. He added that extreme circumstance should be reserved only when it's not possible to make the days up. Ms. Neal said raising the minimum number of instruction days may be a better solution to this problem rather than micromanaging snow day and waiver policy. She also suggested looking at whether schools are utilizing electronic instruction and how that might change the definition of a snow day. Ms. Whicker mentioned being proactive and using electronic days in the future.

Performance Qualified Schools

Ms. Ritz gave an update on performance qualified districts and high schools; some schools were so designated and had begun taking advantage of the flexibility under the statute. The Department will be notifying districts who received "A"s so they can begin to take advantage. Dr. Oliver personally thanked George Frampton for the guidance he provided to Yorktown.

X. ADJOURNMENT



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Superintendent Ritz asked for a motion to adjourn. After a motion by Dr. Oliver and a second by Ms. Neal, a vote to adjourn was unanimous by all members present (11-0).